Thank you for downloading the *Gentlemen of the Hàn* translation of Romance of the Three Kingdoms 1994!

Apologies for taking so much time with this release. This is part 3 of the "Battle of Red Cliffs"-arc and the last segment of the arc.

We hope you enjoy the translation. If there are any issues you notice, kindly let us know. Our Discord is available here: https://discord.gg/b45QuBGfS9. We are always looking for new contributors, so anyone with a knack for translating, editing, proofreading, or creative writing would be more than welcome to join us!

As before, please read our previous Foreword for extra context on the history of this production, the novel, and of the history it is based on: https://pastebin.com/u/GentlemenOfTheHan

HISTORY VS. ROMANTICISM

- This is where Zhou Yu's story in the series reaches its climax. To those familiar with the novel, in this show Zhuge Liang reaches to a very different conclusion about Zhou Yu in this TV series. Rather than a lesser rival, he is given his dues as a capable military commander and "a scholarly general" [1]. While the story doesn't differ from the novel in its plot events, the series does a great deal of subtle reinterpretation of Zhou Yu, taking out many of the odd pettier moments from the novel and casting his suspicions of Zhuge Liang from prudence than envy, with even an extra scene in episode 44 showing Zhou Yu being smart enough to suspect Liu Bei's escape beforehand. His scenes with Xiaoqiao also show his familial and caring side, all which build up to his image as flawed but ultimately great and noble hero of his time.

Often 1994 Three Kingdoms is seen as highly traditionalist and thus somewhat taken for granted, and while 1994 RoTK sticks close to the novel, the adaptational changes it makes are still substantial in elevating the story and adding more humanity.

- The tapestry shown in episode 46 of Zhou Yu's funeral also showcases great understanding of what Han Dynasty artwork should look like, being based on various murals and notably the Funeral Banner of Lady Dai from the Mawangdui Tomb. As each period of Chinese history has their

own motifs and aesthetics, paying attention to it is what separates the greater from the lesser.

- In the show, Liu Bei and Lady Sun are depicted in a loving relationship, to add a bit of romance to the story. In real history however, their marriage was far less amicable, Liu Bei was infamously intimidated by Lady Sun who was unhappy of the marriage-alliance, which is why they never had a child together and Lady Sun left Liu Bei soon after.

- In history, Huang Zhong and Guan Yu never actually had an engagement against each other. At the most likely time of when Liu Bei was on his campaign in the southern commanderies of Jinzhou, Guan Yu would've been moving around in the north of Jiangling defending against Cao Cao's forces during Zhou Yu's campaign in Jiangling [2]. Like many parts of popular retellings of Three Kingdoms, Huang Zhong status as an old warrior came a relatively small mention in the Records of Three Kingdoms, where Huang Zhong was derided as "just an old soldier" by Guan Yu, similar to how Guan Yu was mentioned once by Zhuge Liang to have a "beautiful beard". While seemingly minor, all these details gave inspiration to the character traits the Three Kingdoms is now known for, especially given how laconic ancient Chinese historical records could actually be. While Huang Zhong's actual age remains a mystery, and his talents of archery most likely fiction, his accomplishments as a military general are no less impressive.

- Pang Tong's quotation of the classics is an original line from this TV series, one of many instances where the TV series invoked traditional Chinese cultural texts and works (see also: Zhuge Liang's military philosophy in episode 34, Pang Tong's quoting Shangshu in ep. 36 in the prior batch). The writers have really done their research into the history and literature, and woven into the show throughly, and the best is yet to come.

- Episode 43 includes many new scenes. The expanded scene with Sun Quan's failed attempt at assassination with a dry comedic twist, Sun Quan and Liu Bei riding on horseback, and Liu Bei and Lady Sun's marriage ceremony that is based on traditional Chinese marriage ceremonies.

[1] aka. □□ (rú-jiàng),which is the Chinese term for military officers and warriors with an intellectual, scholarly and artistic side. For example; Yue Fei, Wu Qi, Li Jing, Xin Qiji and Cao Cao would qualify as a □□.

[2] Addendum: There is actually an interesting, popular theory in the Chinese history circles about this; The theory proposes that Guan Yu was running a "guerrila-warfare" of sorts in the Battle of Jiangling, with even writer Ma Boyong (of *Longest Day in Chang'an* and *Wind Blows over Longxi* fame) contributing to it[2].

The basic summary is that Guan Yu had been recorded to formed a blockade on all the northern passages to Jiangling in 208, and sailing on Han-River into Cao Ren's territory with a few thousand troops. However, the actual events and details of Guan Yu's operation are unknown, the only other records that exist are reports of seemingly random skirmishes at different places and times during the Jiangling campaign, with the various Cao-Wei's generals like Xu Huang, Yue Jin and Man Chong from their biographies.
By stringing together all of these events and their locations into a timeline and analyzing the wording of the records themselves, this theory suggests that Guan Yu likely had employed skirmishing tactics to harass Cao Cao's forces to aid Zhou Yu's siege of Jiangling. By using the high manevuerability offered by the river, Guan Yu would've made a series of feint-attacks at these different locations, which were all around the Han-River, to keep Cao-Wei at bay while keeping his own losses small, which lead to no recorded decisive support from Cao-Wei to Cao Ren's front at Jiangling and leading to his ultimate retreat from Jiangling as recorded in history.

Shu-Han famously had the most least historical documentation out of the three, and was noted to have no official court-historians in the Records, so this theory was born due to scarcity of data on this side of the campaign.
Still, this is only a theory, and while we probably will never know the true events that conspired at the Battle of Jiangling, it is an interesting thought-experiment at the very least, and offers maybe another reason why Guan Yu was seen as a major threat by Cao-Wei.

Link to one of the original threads by Ma Boyong in Chinese:
https://www.zhihu.com/question/25388471/answer/30643964

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Final Word

A lot of care and hard work went into this release. We hope you enjoy, and look forward to the next one!